THEOSOPHY

VOL. 67, NO. 11 SEPTEMBER, 1979

Universal Unity and Causation; Human Solidarity; the Law of Karma: Re-incarnation. These are the four links of the golden chain which should bind humanity into one universal Brotherhood. On the day when Theosophy will have accomplished its most holy and most important mission—namely to unite firmly a body of men of all nations in brotherly love and bent on a pure altruistic work, not on a labor with selfish motives—on that day only will Theosophy become higher than any nominal brotherhood of man.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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AUM

Never utter these words: "I do not know this—therefore it is false." One must study to know, know to understand, understand to judge.

—NARADA

THEOSOPHY

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ASPECTS OF TRANSITION

Prophecies

IN the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (xliii-xliv), H.P.B. speaks of a book of Prophecies concerned with the events of the Black Age, or Kali Yuga, remarking that the last of its predictions refers to changes involving "settlements" of accounts between the races. "We have not," she says, "long to wait." Confirmation of this is now amply evident. Mr. Judge, at the end of his chapter on Cycles in the *Ocean*, says something of similar import:

> The first 5000 years of *Kali Yuga* will end between the years 1897 and 1898. This *Yuga* began about 3102 years before the Christian era, at the time of Krishna's death. As 1897-98 are not far off, the scientific men of today will have an opportunity of seeing whether the close of the five-thousand-year cycle will be preceded or followed by any convulsions or great changes political, scientific or physical, or all of these combined. Cyclic changes are now proceeding as year after year the souls from prior civilizations are being incarnated in this period when liberty of thought and action are not so restricted in the West as they have been in the past by dogmatic religious prejudice and bigotry. And at the present time we are in a cycle of transition, when, as a transition period should indicate, everything in philosophy, religion and society is changing. In a transition period the full and complete figures and rules respecting cycles are not given out to a generation which elevates money above all thoughts and scoffs at the spiritual view of man and nature.

It is hardly necessary to gather evidence to show that we are now well into the transition period here described. We might say that we are in the "midst" of it, except that who can know what the remaining years of this century hold in store? Yet already the alterations are as diverse and far-reaching as both H.P.B. and

Mr. Judge suggest. The physical changes, both natural and man-made, are numerous enough. Fatal earthquakes have been frequent in recent years, while the current works of ecologists abound in serious warnings concerning the welfare of the planet, which, they declare, can hardly survive continued indifference to the effects of pollution of various sorts.

The wars of the twentieth century, including the darkly climactic development of nuclear methods of destruction, have left an ineffaceable mark upon our times. The changes in balances of power among the nations are too numerous to list, while dramatic revisions in the relationships between the races give full confirmation of H.P.B.'s observation that accounts will be "squared." The breakdown of orthodoxies in religion is a commonplace of present experience, and many are the voices which declare that the decline in both public and private morality is due to loss of faith. Meanwhile subtler changes, not understood but now and then recognized in their effect, are rapidly proceeding. These have to do with the interrelation of the inner principles, involving a heightened activity of Manas and a general increase in psychic capacities or tendencies. H.P.B. spoke of this at some length in her Messages to the American Theosophists, and in one of her articles predicted that the psychic idiosyncracies of humanity would undergo a great change.

The criticism of materialism which, except for H.P.B., was in the nineteenth century the cry of a few lonely voices, has now become a strong chorus of the moral intelligence of the times, with, here and there, the beginning of respectful recognition of her role as pioneer in the reform of philosophy and religion. Already the "habits" of mass opinion are moving toward spontaneous acceptance, although in vague terms, of Theosophical ideas, instead of the automatic rejection they evoked only a few years ago. The sciences are increasingly "psychological" in their modes of inquiry, and a veritable revolution in Psychology itself has been accomplished by such unusual practitioners and pioneer theorists as A. H. Maslow, Carl Rogers, Rollo May, and a number of others. Meanwhile there has been a distinct revival of interest in ancient philosophy, and general admission on the part of leading physicists that there is more than one way of "knowing."

These are positive indications of the various changes now going on. They are observed, however, against a background of social,

the "Me" generation

economic, and moral confusion which seems to worsen every day. The reference to the "Me" generation, a cliché of the time, seems little more than verification of H.P.B.'s characterization of present mankind as having made of selfishness an "ethical characteristic." And that they have made of vice an art, as she also said, is equally evident in many of the forms of popular entertainment that now command a mass audience. Such trends, we are given to understand, are inevitable during the Kali Yuga. For description of the social and political life of this age, the Vishnu Purana remains an accurate source:

Kali Yuga

> There will be contemporary monarchs, reigning over the earth—kings of churlish spirit, violent temper, and ever addicted to falsehood and wickedness. . . . they will seize the property of their subjects, and be intent on the wives of others; they will be of unlimited power, their lives will be short, their desires insatiable. . . . Wealth and piety will decrease until the world will be wholly depraved. Property alone will confer rank; wealth will be the only source of devotion; passion will be the sole bond of union between the sexes; falsehood will be the only means of success in litigation; and women will be objects merely of sensual gratification. . . . External types will be the only distinction of the several orders of life. . . .

These are the qualities and dominant traits of Kali Yuga, now everywhere apparent. It is a period of which Mr. Judge said that we can do nothing *against* it, since the cycles must run their rounds, adding, however, that we can do "a great deal *in* it," explaining that the fact of its being the iron, or foundation age, "gives opportunities obtained in no other." He continues:

> It is only a quarter as long as the longest of the other ages, and it is therefore crammed four times as full of life and activity. Hence the rapidity with which all things come to pass in it. A very slight cause produces gigantic effects. To aspire ever so little now will bring about greater and more lasting effects for good than at any other time. And, similarly, evil intent has greater powers for evil.

evil intent

Mr. Judge next refers to the cycle which began some eighty-two years ago:

> These great forces are visibly increased at the close of certain cycles in the *Kali Yuga*. The present cycle, which closes Nov. 17, 1897—Feb. 18, 1898, is one of the most important of any that have been. Opportunities for producing permanent effects for good, in themselves, and in the world as a whole, are given to Theosophists at the present time—opportunities they may

never have again if these are scattered. (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 97.)

A comment by H.P.B. (*S.D.* I, 224-25) bears broadly on the present cycle: "In our present all-material Fifth Race, the earthly Spirit of the Fourth is still strong in us; but we are approaching the time when the pendulum of evolution will direct its swing decidedly upwards, bringing Humanity back on a parallel line with the primitive third Root-Race in Spirituality." In short, we live in a time of mixed influences, so far as cycles are concerned, with self-destructive tendencies working their way to the surface and out on the external plane, even while hidden awakenings are going on. The contrasting forces are given in terms of moral psychodynamics in H.P.B.'s fourth message to the American Theosophists:

> Your position as the fore-runners of the sixth sub-race of the fifth root-race has its own special perils as well as its special advantages. Psychism, with all its allurements and all its dangers, is necessarily developing among you, and you must beware lest the Psychic outruns the Manasic and Spiritual development. Psychic capacities held perfectly under control, checked and directed by the Manasic principle, are valuable aids in development. But these capacities running riot, controlling instead of controlled, using instead of being used, lead the Student into the most dangerous delusions and the certainty of moral destruction. Watch therefore carefully this development, inevitable in your race and evolution-period, so that it may finally work for good and not for evil; and receive, in advance, the sincere and potent blessings of Those whose good-will will never fail you, if you do not fail yourselves.

It is the mixture of limited psychic abilities with various delusions, so easily produced when these capacities are not understood, that causes the most confusion. There are those, H.P.B. says, who have had "signs, illuminations, knowledge not common to men," yet who lack "the clear-seeing eye which could reduce these facts to their right order, and interpret them aright." In "Modern Apostles and Pseudo-Messiahs" she speaks of those who, having had some sort of "vision," imagine themselves to be in possession of a "universal panacea," and are able, through eloquence and magnetic force, to attract large audiences, yet they are stranded on barren shores through their exercise of authority over others. Even more deceptive are those who mix true teachings with permissive compromises which attract attention. H.P.B.

Aryasangha Asangha Tantra

speaks of this in the article on Aryasangha, the founder of the first and true Yogacharya School, in the *Glossary*. Aryasangha was a direct disciple of the Buddha, she says, yet his imitator, who used the same name, or the contraction of Asamgha or Asangha, and who lived in the fifth or sixth century of our era, is commonly confused with the original Aryasangha. Of this second Asangha, H.P.B. writes:

> Internal evidence alone is sufficient to show that the works written by him and translated about the year 600 of our era, works full of Tantra worship, ritualism, and tenets followed now considerably by the "red-cap" sects in Sikhim, Bhutan, and Little Tibet, cannot be the same as the lofty system of the early Yogacharya school of pure Buddhism, which is neither northern nor southern, but absolutely esoteric. Though none of the genuine Yogacharya books (the *Narjol chodpa*) have ever been made public or marketable, yet one finds in the *Yogacharya Bhumi Shastra* of the *pseudo*-Aryasangha a great deal from the older system, into the tenets of which he may have been initiated. It is however, so mixed up with Sivaism and Tantrika magic and superstitions, that the work defeats its own end notwithstanding its remarkable dialectical subtilty.

Elsewhere in the *Glossary* (under "Yogacharya") H.P.B. warns that the doctrines of this sixth-century Asangha, made up of "tantras and mantras, his formularies, litanies, spells and mudras, would certainly, if attempted without a Guru, serve rather purposes of sorcery and black magic than real Yoga." Kali Yug

These are tendencies of the Kali Yoga, already evident in superficial form in the present-day popularity of Tantric doctrines and practices. At the same time, the effects of increased Manasic 322 activity may also be recognized. There are at last signs of a basic reform in scientific thinking, and a turning away from the mechanistic materialism which has blighted both culture and education for many long years. The grip of materialism on the modern mind may be said to have become secure through the immeasurable influence of such seventeenth-century thinkers as Descartes and Francis Bacon. H.P.B. said in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 481): 326-7

> Bacon was one of the first to strike the key-note of materialism, not only by his inductive method (renovated from ill-digested Aristotle), but by the general tenor of his writings. He inverts the order of mental Evolution when saying that "the first Creation of God was the light of the sense; the last was the light of the reason; and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of the Spirit." It is just the reverse. The light of Spirit

is the eternal Sabbath of the mystic or occultist, and he pays little attention to that of mere sense.

By the eighteenth century, skepticism, forerunner of materialism, was in full flower, having the effect, as H.P.B. remarked in *Isis Unveiled*, of blinding the spiritual sight of mankind so as to "lose every notion of the superior powers of its own divine spirit." And in 1890 she wrote in *Lucifer* (in "The Cycle Moveth") that, "Outside the limited circle of mystics which has existed in every age, people endowed with correct psychic intuition were still fewer at the end of the last century than they are now." In other words, a change for the better had already begun in her time, although the weight of materialistic opinion and belief, so thoroughly established by the eighteenth-century thinkers, would last until well into the twentieth century.

Today the tide is plainly in the other direction. Most effective, perhaps, in giving expression to the changed attitude concerning science and the pursuit of truth have been the late Michael Polanyi and the still living Lewis Mumford. Polanyi, a Hungarian scientist spurred to deep reflection by the doctrinaire materialism of the Russian Communists, gave up chemistry, a field in which he was eminent, to devote all his time to philosophy and the morality of social issues. His *Personal Knowledge* (1958) is a clear about-face in the conception of scientific knowledge, grounding it in the intuitions and moral qualities of scientists, while he showed elsewhere that the materialistic assumptions of the scientific theory of knowledge would eventually destroy the very foundations of science itself. Mumford, in the *Pentagon of Power* (1970), devotes many pages to the demoralizing effects of Bacon's influence, showing that his principle, Knowledge is Power, has resulted in the amorality of science and the irresponsibility of national leaders. A strong current of repudiation of the scientific thinking which declares moral ideas and principles out of bounds in the pursuit of truth is now everywhere noticeable, obtaining effective confirmation from the practical demonstrations of ecologists such as Rachel Carson and Barry Commoner. Materialism, in short, is no longer the accepted orthodoxy in modern thought. It is plainly on the defensive, and while the available alternatives are far from well defined, in no recent period of history have changes in outlook so suddenly come about.

In the field of scholarship there is the same sort of progress and

change, such as increasing recognition of the importance, in spiritual and moral terms, of such figures as Giordano Bruno and Pico della Mirandola. A serious Platonic revival is also under way, with similar interest in the ideas and influence of the Neoplatonists. Scholars such as René Grousset in France, Frances Yates in England, and Giorgio de Santillana in the United States are restoring respect for ancient and Renaissance philosophers, while as the result of various influences Leibniz is growing in stature for present-day thinkers. A new crop of essayists is taking the place of such lonely figures of the past as Joseph Wood Krutch, with inspired writers such as Tolstoy and Thoreau gaining renewed attention. Something resembling a Sufi renaissance is going on in the Western world, and there are studies linking Muslim mysticism with Pythagorean teachings, showing the foundations of Islamic culture in ideas drawn from ancient wisdom.

Quite evidently, the modern world is getting ready for a new conception of knowledge. Nearly a hundred years ago, H. P. Blavatsky declared in *The Secret Doctrine*: "The Aristotle-Baconian method may have its advantages, but it has undeniably already demonstrated its defects." (II, 153.) This criticism of scientistic thinking, ignored during her time, is now virtually the consensus outlook of serious observers and critics. The intent made public in the Preface to *Isis Unveiled*, calling for "a restitution of borrowed robes, and the vindication of calumniated but glorious reputations," is on the way to fulfillment, and the time may not be far off when serious attention is at last given to the one who set the keynote for change of outlook in the twentieth century, and provided the synthesis of the philosophic wisdom of the past in terms that could be grasped and assimilated by the modern mind.

What will mark the beginning of this longed-for fulfillment? Who can say? It is said that when the materials are ready, the architect will appear. Conceivably, the completion of the readiness spoken of, in our time, awaits the shock of disaster, as the karmic pendulum of an abused and exploited nature swings back in still more ways than those presently in evidence. Open-minded individuals often need only the spur of reflection to give their minds a new direction, but the world requires a more "objective" stimulus. One has only to read the daily press between the lines to see that some such provocation—or a series of them—is now on the way.

FROM "THE OCCULT WORLD"

[A. P. Sinnett's book, *The Occult World,* begins by contrasting occult and modern science, the author attempting to explain the policy of secrecy and retirement characteristic of advanced occultists. From his own experience, Sinnett is able to assure his readers that, far from desiring to prove their powers or advertise their knowledge, the members of the Adept fraternity purposely avoid all publicity. In *The Occult World,* Sinnett emphasizes, it is *he*—not the Adepts—who is trying to convince the world of their existence and win a hearing for their philosophy.

Relating several phenomena performed at his Simla home during a six-week visit of H.P.B. and Col. Olcott (September-October, 1880), Sinnett tells how H.P.B. spoke of "the Brothers," attributing the phenomena to their power over space, time, mind, and matter, and always consulting them by mental "telephone" before attempting a demonstration. Knowing the "intricate suspiciousness" of the ordinary mind when confronted with the extraordinary, Sinnett devotes himself to showing, in great detail, all possible ways by which this or that phenomenon of H.P.B.'s could *not* have been fraudulent. But he was nevertheless determined to devise an infallible "proof" of Adept power. The test he proposed will seem the more ingenious when it is remembered that in his day the telephone and telegraph were still matters of hearsay to the average man. Today, when teletype, radio, and television have duplicated mechanically the instantaneous communication-at-a-distance common between the Mahatmas and H.P.B., it still makes for wonderment that proficients in occult science do with trained human faculties what modern science needs elaborate instruments to perform. At the same time, other modern inventions have fully justified the reluctance of the Adepts to circulate more specific knowledge of the occult arts.

Since *The Occult World* has long been out of print, we extract the Mahatma's correspondence, with some of Sinnett's accompanying narrative.—Eds. THEOS.]

NOTE:—This is the first part of a series which was originally printed in THEOSOPHY, Vol. 39.

I

ONE day, therefore, I asked Madame Blavatsky whether if I wrote a letter to one of the Brothers explaining my views, she could get it delivered for me. I hardly thought this was probable, as I knew how very unapproachable the Brothers generally are; but as she said that at any rate she would try, I wrote a letter, addressing it "to the Unknown Brother," and gave it to her to see if any result would ensue. . . . The idea I had specially in mind when I wrote the letter. . . , was that of all test phenomena one could wish for, the best would be the production in our presence in India of a copy of the London *Times* of that day's date. With such a piece of evidence in my hand, I argued, I would undertake to convert everybody in Simla who was capable of linking two ideas together, to a belief in the possibility of obtaining by occult agency physical results which were beyond the control of ordinary science. . . .

A day or two elapsed before I heard anything of the fate of my letter, but Madame Blavatsky then informed me that I was to have an answer. . . . Hearing this, I at once regretted that I had not written at greater length, arguing my view of the required concession more fully. I wrote again, therefore, without waiting for the actual receipt of the expected letter.

A day of two after, I found one evening on my writing table the first letter sent me by my new correspondent. I may here explain, what I learned afterwards, that he was a native of the Punjab who was attracted to occult studies from his earliest boyhood. He was sent to Europe while still a youth at the intervention of a relative—himself an occultist—to be educated in Western knowledge, and since then has been fully initiated in the greater knowledge of the East. From the self-complacent point of view of the ordinary European this will seem a strange reversal of the proper order of things, but I need not stop to examine that consideration now. My correspondent is known to me as the Mahatma Koot Hoomi. . . .

The letter I received began, *in medias res,* about the phenomena I had professed. "Precisely," the Mahatma wrote, "because the test of the London newspaper would close the mouths of the sceptics," it was inadmissable. "See it in what light you will, the world is yet in its first stage of disenthralment . . . hence unprepared. Very true we work by natural, not supernatural, means and laws. But as on the one hand science would find itself unable, in its present state,

to account for the wonders given in its name, and on the other the ignorant masses would still be left to view the phenomenon in the light of a miracle, everyone who would thus be made a witness to the occurrence would be thrown off his balance, and the result would be deplorable. Believe me it would be so especially for yourself, who originated the idea, and for the devoted woman who so foolishly rushes into the wide, open door leading to notoriety. This door, though opened by so friendly a hand as yours, would prove very soon a trap—and a fatal one, indeed, for her. And such is not surely your object. . . .

"Were we to accede to your desires, know you really what consequences would follow in the trail of success? The inexorable shadow which follows all human innovations moves on, yet few are they who are ever conscious of its approach and dangers. What are, then, they to expect who would offer the world an innovation which, owing to human ignorance, if believed in, will surely be attributed to those dark agencies the two-thirds of humanity believe in and dread as yet? . . . The success of an attempt of such a kind as the one you propose must be calculated and based upon a thorough knowledge of the people around you. It depends entirely upon the social and moral conditions of the people in their bearing on these deepest and most mysterious questions which can stir the human mind—the deific powers in man and the possibilities contained in Nature. How many even of your best friends, of those who surround you, are more than superficially interested in these abstruse problems? You could count them upon the fingers of your right hand. Your race boasts of having liberated in their century the genius so long imprisoned in the narrow vase of dogmatism and intolerance—the genius of knowledge, wisdom, and free thought. It says that, in their turn, ignorant prejudice and religious bigotry, bottled up like the wicked *djin* of old, and sealed by the Solomons of science, rest at the bottom of the sea, and can never, escaping to the surface again, reign over the world as in the days of old: that the public mind is quite free, in short, and ready to accept any demonstrated truth.

"Ay, but is it verily so, my respected friend? Experimental knowledge does not quite date from 1662, when Bacon, Robert Boyle, and the Bishop of Chester transformed under the royal charter their 'invisible college' into a society for the promotion of experimental science. Ages before the Royal Society found itself

Veil or akasha

becoming a reality upon the plan of the 'Prophetic Scheme,' an innate longing for the hidden, a passionate love for, and study of, Nature, had led men in every generation to try and fathom her secrets deeper than their neighbors did. *Roma ante Romulum fuit* [Rome was, before Romulus] is an axiom taught us in your English schools. . . . The *Vril* of the *Coming Race* was the common property of races now extinct. And as the very existence of those gigantic ancestors of ours is now questioned—though in the Himavats, on the very territory belonging to you, we have a cave full of the skeletons of these giants—and their huge frames, when found, are invariably regarded as isolated freaks of Nature—so the *vril,* or *akas* as we call it, is looked upon as an impossibility—a myth. And without a thorough knowledge of *akas*—its combinations and properties, how can science hope to account for such phenomena?

"We doubt not but the men of your science are open to conviction; yet facts must be first demonstrated to them; they must first have become their own property, have proved amenable to their modes of investigation, before you find them ready to admit them as facts. If you but look into the preface to the *Micrographia* you will find, in Hookes' suggestions, that the intimate relations of objects were of less account in his eyes than their external operation on the senses, and Newton's fine discoveries found in him their greatest opponent. The modern Hookeses are many. Like this learned but ignorant man of old, your modern men of science are less anxious to suggest a physical connection of facts which might unlock for them many an occult force in Nature, than to provide a convenient classification of scientific experiments, so that the most essential quality of a hypothesis is, not that it should be *true*, but only *plausible*, in their opinion.

"So far for science—as much as we know of it. As for human nature in general, it is the same now as it was a million years ago. Prejudice, based upon selfishness, a general unwillingness to give up an established order of things for new modes of life and thought—and occult study requires all that and much more—pride and stubborn resistance to truth, if it but upsets their previous notions of things—such are the characteristics of your age. . . . What, then, would be the results of the most astounding phenomena, supposing we consented to have them produced? However successful, danger would be growing proportionately

with success. No choice would soon remain but to go on, ever *crescendo*, or to fall in this endless struggle with prejudice and ignorance, killed by your own weapons. Test after test would be required, and would have to be furnished; every subsequent phenomenon expected to be more marvellous than the preceding one. Your daily remark is, that one cannot be expected to believe unless he becomes an eye-witness. Would the lifetime of a man suffice to satisfy the whole world of sceptics?

"It may be an easy matter to increase the original number of believers at Simla to hundreds and thousands. But what of the hundreds of millions of those who could not be made eye-witnesses? The ignorant, unable to grapple with the invisible operators, might some day vent their rage on the visible agents at work; the higher and educated classes would go on disbelieving, as ever, tearing you to shreds as before. In common with many, you blame us for our great secrecy. Yet we know something of human nature, for the experience of long centuries—ay, ages, has taught us. And we know that so long as science has anything to learn, and a shadow of religious dogmatism lingers in the hearts of the multitudes, the world's prejudices have to be conquered step by step, not at a rush. As hoary antiquity had more than one Socrates, so the dim future will give birth to more than one martyr. Enfranchised Science contemptuously turned away her face from the Copernican opinion renewing the theories of Aristarchus Samius, who 'affirmeth that the earth moveth circularly about her own centre,' years before the Church sought to sacrifice Galileo as a *holocaust* to the Bible. The ablest mathematician at the Court of Edward VI., Robert Recorde, was left to starve in jail by his colleagues, who laughed at his *Castle of Knowledge*, declaring his discoveries vain phantasies. Wm. Gilbert of Colchester—Queen Elizabeth's physician—died poisoned, only because—this real founder of experimental science in England—has had the audacity of anticipating Galileo; of pointing out Copernicus' fallacy as to the 'third movement,' which was gravely alleged to account for the parallelism of the earth's axis of rotation! The enormous learning of the Paracelsi, of the Agrippas and the Deys was ever doubted. It was science which laid her sacrilegious hand upon the great work 'De Magnete'—'The Heavenly White Virgin' (*Akas*) and others. And it was the illustrious 'Chancellor of England and of Nature'—Lord Verulam-Bacon—who having won the name of

the Father of Inductive Philosophy, permitted himself to speak of such men as the above-named as the 'Alchemicians of the Fantastic philosophy.'

"All this is old history, you will think. Verily so, but the chronicles of our modern days do not differ very essentially from their predecessors. And we have but to bear in mind the recent persecutions of mediums in England, the burning of supposed witches and sorcerers in South America, Russia, and the frontiers of Spain, to assure ourselves that the only salvation of the genuine proficient in occult sciences lies in the scepticism of the public: the charlatans and the jugglers are the natural shields of the adepts. The public safety is only ensured by our keeping secret the terrible weapons which might otherwise be used against it, and which, as you have been told, become deadly in the hands of the wicked and selfish."

I [Sinnett] replied to the letter above quoted at some length, arguing, if I remember rightly, that the European mind was less hopelessly intractable than Koot Hoomi represented it. His second letter was as follows:—

"We will be at cross purposes in our correspondence until it has been made entirely plain that occult science has its own methods of research, as fixed and arbitrary as the methods of its antithesis, physical science, are in their way. If the latter has its dicta, so also have the former; and he who would cross the boundary of the unseen world can no more prescribe how he will proceed, than the traveller who tries to penetrate to the inner subterranean recesses of L'Hassa the Blessed could show the way to his guide. The mysteries never were, never can be, put within the reach of the general public, not, at least, until that longed-for day when our religious philosophy becomes universal. At no time have more than a scarcely appreciable minority of men possessed Nature's secret, though multitudes have witnessed the practical evidences of the possibility of their possession. The adept is the rare efflorescence of a generation of inquirers; and to become one, he must obey the inward impulse of his soul, irrespective of the prudential considerations of worldly science or sagacity.

"Your desire is to be brought to communicate with one of us directly, without the agency of either Madame Blavatsky or any medium. Your idea would be, as I understand it, to obtain such communications, either by letters, as the present one, or by audible words, so as to be guided by one of us in the management, and

modes of life

principally in the instruction of the Society. You seek all this, and yet, as you say yourself, hitherto you have not found sufficient reasons to even give up your modes of life, directly hostile to such modes of communication. This is hardly reasonable. He who would lift up high the banner of mysticism and proclaim its reign near at hand must give the example to others. He must be the first to change his modes of life, and, regarding the study of the occult mysteries as the upper step in the ladder of knowledge, must loudly proclaim it such, despite exact science and the opposition of society. 'The kingdom of Heaven is obtained by force,' say the Christian mystics. It is but with armed hand, and ready to either conquer or perish, that the modern mystic can hope to achieve his object.

"My first answer covered, I believe, most of the questions contained in your second and even third letter. Having, then, expressed therein my opinion that the world in general was unripe for any too staggering proof of occult power, there but remains to deal with the isolated individuals who seek, like yourself, to penetrate behind the veil of matter into the world of primal causes—*i.e.*, we need only consider now the cases of yourself and Mr. Hume."

I [Sinnett] should explain that one of my friends at Simla, deeply interested with me in the progress of this investigation, had, on reading Koot Hoomi's first letter to me, addressed my correspondent himself. More favourably circumstanced than I, for such an enterprise, he had even proposed to make a complete sacrifice of his other pursuits, to pass away into any distant seclusion which might be appointed for the purpose, where he might, if accepted as a pupil in occultism, learn enough to return to the world armed with powers which would enable him to demonstrate the realities of spiritual development and the errors of modern materialism, and then devote his life to the task of combating modern incredulity and leading men to a practical comprehension of a better life. I resume the letter:—

"This gentleman also has done me the great honour to address me by name, offering to me a few questions, and stating the conditions upon which he would be willing to work for us seriously. But your motives and aspirations being of diametrically opposite character, and hence leading to different results, I must reply to each of you separately.

"The first and chief consideration in determining us to accept or reject your offer lies in the inner motive which propels you to seek our instruction and, in a certain sense, our guidance; the latter in all cases under reserve, as I understand it, and therefore remaining a question independent of aught else. Now, what are your motives? I may try to define them in their general aspects, leaving details for further consideration. They are—(1) the desire to see positive and unimpeachable proofs that there really are forces in Nature of which science knows nothing; (2) the hope to appropriate them some day—the sooner the better, for you do not like to wait—so as to enable yourself (*a*) to demonstrate their existence to a few chosen Western minds, (*b*) to contemplate future life as an objective reality built upon the rock of knowledge, not of faith, and (*c*) to finally learn—most important this, among all your motives, perhaps, though the most occult and the best guarded—the whole truth about our lodges and ourselves; to get, in short, the positive assurance that the 'Brothers,' of whom everyone hears so much and sees so little, are real entities, not fictions of a disordered, hallucinated brain. Such, viewed in their best light, appear to us your motives for addressing me. And in the same spirit do I answer them, hoping that my sincerity will not be interpreted in a wrong way, or attributed to anything like an unfriendly spirit.

"To our minds, then, these motives, sincere and worthy of every serious consideration from the worldly standpoint, appear *selfish*. (You have to pardon me what you might view as crudeness of language, if your desire is that which you really profess—to learn truth and get instruction from us who belong to quite a different world from the one you move in.) They are selfish, because you must be aware that the chief object of the Theosophical Society is not so much to gratify individual aspirations as to serve our fellow-men, and the real value of this term 'selfish,' which may jar upon your ear, has a peculiar significance with us which it cannot have with you; therefore, to begin with, you must not accept it otherwise than in the former sense. Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness, if, in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of a desire for self-benefit, or a tendency to do injustice, even where these exist unconsciously to himself. Yet you have ever discussed, but to put

down, the idea of a Universal Brotherhood, questioned its usefulness, and advised to remodel the Theosophical Society on the principle of a college for the special study of occultism. This, my respected and esteemed friend and brother—will never do!"

(To be continued)

THOUGHTS ON DISSOLUTION

Of human life the time is a point, and the substance is in a flux, and the preception dull, and the composition of the whole body subject to putrefaction, and the soul a whirl, and fortune hard to divine, and fame a thing devoid of judgment. And, to say all in a word, everything which belongs to the body is a stream, and what belongs to the soul is a dream and vapor, and life is a warfare and a stranger's sojourn, and after-fame is oblivion. What then is that which is able to conduct a man? One thing, and only one, philosophy. But this consists in keeping the dæmon within a man free from violence and unharmed, superior to pains and pleasures, doing nothing without a purpose, nor yet falsely and with hypocrisy, not feeling the need of another man's doing or not doing anything; and besides, accepting all that happens, and all that is allotted, as coming from thence, wherever it is, from whence he himself came; and, finally, waiting for death with a cheerful mind, as being nothing else than a dissolution of the elements of which every living being is compounded. But if there is no harm to the elements themselves in each continually changing into another, why should a man have any apprehension about the change and dissolution of all the elements? For it is according to nature, and nothing is evil which is according to nature.

—MARCUS AURELIUS

Fundamentals — versus Aspiration

THE GOALS OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

WHEN we think of goals we usually have in mind particular objectives which are set before us as practical needs. Most goals are established, not by deliberated choice, but by the imperatives or necessities of our nature. Thus the first goal of the new-born babe is to breathe, to get air into the lungs immediately, to start the physical organism functioning. After birth there follows a whole sequence of built-in goals as a consequence of the needs of our developing nature, while the contours of the goals are shaped by the values of society, usually adopted ready-made.

Our desire and feeling nature also becomes active and needs direction. This is the work of the mind, as marked by the youngster who asks "Why?" and "Why not?" Then comes the turbulent period of puberty and the adjustments required by the transition to maturity, involving choice of a career, marriage, family, and the practice of a religion. Each of these conditions exists as the scenery in a succession of stages of life; the individual moves from setting to setting, meanwhile adjusting in each to the prevailing conditions.

Aspirations are different from goals. While a goal, although urgent, need not originate in conscious choice, an aspiration must be self-generated. It arises within our own higher nature as a desire to achieve something good and great, something involving a change in our nature, a structural reconditioning of our character and qualities. Thus, aspiration is an inward matter; as a moving force it implies the existence in the depths of our being of a resource which is universal. Aspiration translates the intuition of the highest or universal into the active force of a high desire which, in turn, causes the mind to formulate a goal as a distinct objective. To be universal is to be without limits as to dimension, distance, time or conditions. So an aspiration can be as unlimited as the spiritual, universal resource which it expresses. We can aspire to the highest goal imagination can conceive. We can "hitch our wagon to a star."

hitch our wagon to a star

The duality of our nature results in a duality of developmental goals, as implied by the division of goals as either "pre-set" or "self-determined." In both cases the goal is the distinct focus of a desire. The "pre-set" goal is our response to urgencies of the material and personal nature; when we are hungry, our goal is food. An unguided personal want seeks pre-eminence, setting the goal of domination of others in our relationships. Meanwhile the Soul stands among all the material things which give external shape to the conditions of our earthly life, its energies absorbed by the human tendency to render these conditions into pre-set goals. The "self-determined" goals, on the other hand, express aspirations which arise from intuitive longings. The outer world can be translated into goals with finite certainty because it is the world of measurable dimensions, whereas spiritual striving, being universal, is without delineation or dimension. The higher goals, therefore, having inner provocation, must be self-determined; or, as stated in the Third Fundamental Proposition of Theosophy, "Self-induced and Self-devised."

Cosmic evolution is the process of the gradual unfoldment outward from the inner, hidden and homogeneous to full manifestation, producing the world of visible things—the objective, the heterogeneous and the conditioned. The law of this process is expressed in the Second Fundamental Proposition, which speaks of "The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically 'the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,' called the 'manifesting stars,' and 'the sparks of Eternity'." The process is also characterized by Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 2): . . ."all is soul and spirit ever evolving under the rule of law which is inherent in the whole." The evolution of the individual man follows the same process as the archetype provided by cosmic evolution.

When we consider Mr. Judge's statement that "all is soul and spirit," we may find that spirit is the power to perceive, which never changes and is universal, and that soul is constituted of accumulated perceptions. Soul is thus the harvest of experiences, the essence of our character, the qualitative degree of our development. So the soul grows. It is the "Eternal Pilgrim" in the cycles of evolution. The soul follows the cosmic process of an unfolding outward of the inexhaustible resources of the power of perception in spirit, performing acts of perception which generate capabilities,

talents, insights—all the qualities grouped under character and body which distinguish us as individuals.

What is the soul, the "Eternal Pilgrim"? The term "soul" may be applied to the accumulated perceptions or experiences obtained on each of the various levels of our being. Thus we have the Divine Soul, the Human Soul, the Animal Soul, and occasionally the designation of Astral Soul is used. But "Soul" as the "Eternal Pilgrim" must pertain to the real man, the reincarnating Ego. Therefore, "soul" as the immortal man includes both the Perceiver and its perceptions, which together constitute the true individuality.

It is said in Theosophy that in deep sleep, or Sushupti, the Ego is in its original state of absolute consciousness. Mr. Judge calls this state a "great spiritual reservoir" where the soul partakes, to the extent that the man's nature permits, of the "banquet of the gods." So we, as Egos, are truly universal beings, having potentially "power over space, time, matter and mind." But this power can be expressed here on the physical plane only to the extent that the lower nature permits.

Whence comes the Ego? What is its origin? Where is its home? When we turn to the Third Fundamental Proposition of Theosophy, we find postulated "The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the Cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term." Here it is evident that the Ego as Perceiver traces back to the Unknown Root. The Ego, as both perceiver and its perceptions of accumulated experiences—as the true Individuality—begins as a "spark" of the Universal Over-Soul. Therefore, the Ego's own plane is the Universal Over-Soul or the Universal Sixth Principle, known in the individual man as the principle of Buddhi.

The Ego, upon awakening from Deep Sleep, where it has all the knowledge of its spiritual past, descends within a period of a few minutes from this state of universal knowledge and insight to the narrowly circumscribed personal condition of inhabiting a physical body. What happens during this brief transition to so dim the egoic powers? The egoic perspective is progressively dimmed by the

obscuring effect of matter, since the as yet undisciplined lower principles will not permit the light of the Ego to shine through, and the opacity of the physical brain prevents reception of higher insights while awake in a body. This descent is comparable to the path of a man from the full sunlight and unlimited vistas of the upper air, down to the surface of the sea, then plunging through the translucent upper layers of water, and gradually descending through more shadowed regions until he finally comes to rest in the darkness of the sea floor—which corresponds to the physical, waking condition. The passage of the soul from the egoic to the personal level summarizes the evolutionary descent, and the subsequent ascent requires millions of years to clear up the obscuring effect of our lower instruments.

What are the steps necessary to accomplish this evolutionary journey? First, we must center our sense of self, our conception of identity, in the highest universal or spiritual reality. Second, we must awaken and train the mind to subjectively perceive the abstractions which constitute the universal truths at the spiritual level. So, too, must the mind be made capable of translating these subjectively perceived abstractions into practical conceptions which are capable of immediate application in daily life. Third, the feeling nature must be refined and elevated to reflect the highest level of our thoughts, and our sense of self be so expanded as to include, first, the immediate community, then the nation, followed by the whole of humanity, and finally, the whole of life. This is our brotherhood with all that lives. We need, also to transform our astral and physical vehicles, making them responsive to the slightest impression from our spiritual nature. Actual centers in the physical body may be aroused from dormancy to activity. The centers of energy in the astral body may be transformed into discrete organs, ultimately forming the permanent astral body, which is the substantial vehicle of conscious immortality.

From the foregoing it can be seen that as we gradually accomplish the goals of human evolution we bring the various functional levels of our nature into coordinated alignment. The powers of the highest intellection come to reflect the universal perspective of the self, desire and feelings being channeled according to the mental conceptions, while the astral and physical bodies become the faithful instruments of universal insight, as truly as the compass needle responds to the invisible yet all-pervasive Magnetism of the Mag-

netic Pole. With our nature so aligned that all the functional levels accurately reflect the impulses from above, and transmit them to the level below, the universality of spirit flows into natural expression in everyday life, as the "all-embracing desire for universal good, love, and for all that loves and feels, needs help and kindness."

To achieve the goals of human evolution we must sustain our effort by aspiration which is continuously renewed and freshened by perceptions which remind us of the actual reality of the goals toward which we strive, even amid the confusion and illusions of personal life. The goals of human evolution are accomplished by an endless succession of choices, each a self-determined goal, or, as expressed in the Third Fundamental Proposition of Theosophy, by "self-induced and self-devised efforts." These immediate goals of choice, to be fully useful as steps of progress, must each one render the brotherhood of Universal Self into a specific act.

The Enduring Soul

I have held and hold souls to be immortal . . . . [Catholics teach] they do not pass from body to body, but go to Paradise, Purgatory or Hell. But I have reasoned deeply, and, speaking as a philosopher, since the soul is not found without body and yet is not body, it may be in one body or in another, and pass from body to body. This, if it be not [proved] true, seems at least likely, according to the opinion of Pythagoras. . . .

In the circle, which comprehends in itself the beginning and the end, we have the figure of true being; and circular motion is the only enduring form of motion. From this Spirit, which is called the Life of the Universe, proceed the life and soul of everything which has soul and life—which life, however, I understand to be immortal, as well in bodies as in their souls, all being immortal, there being no other death than division and congregation; which doctrine seems to be expressed in Ecclesiastes, where it is said nothing is new under the sun.

—Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)

letters • questions • comment

In both Theosophical books and meetings, there are frequent references to "Masters of Wisdom." Can the existence of such beings be supported by real evidence?

When considering the idea of "real evidence," it is necessary to have in mind the *real* nature of that which is being sought. If, when seeking to validate the existence of "Masters of Wisdom," one has in mind a man in the flesh, of noble visage, of powerful manner, and one possessing the ability to perform what appear to be miraculous feats, the search would be meaningless.

"Masters" are Mahatmas, *i.e.*, *Maha* (Great) *Atma* (Souls). Physical appearances and phenomenal acts would not, therefore, be "real evidence" for the existence of such beings. In Theosophic teachings the soul is referred to in a number of ways. A brief summary of these might be that the soul is the perceiver plus the acquired experience from the perceptions (experiences) undergone. (See Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms* and *The Ocean of Theosophy*.)

The world of our sense perceptions, that of the man of flesh, is deceptive and not a true reflection of the acquired intelligence of the soul. If we judge on this basis, a man with knowledge and control of physical and psychic laws, but with little or no spirituality, could masquerade as a "Master of Wisdom." The hallmark of the Mahatma is his spirituality. Spirituality is the *sine qua non,* knowledge and control of the hidden laws of nature are *natural* possessions of high adepts. In "Mahatmas and Chelas," H.P.B. states: "The real Mahatma is then not his physical body but that higher Manas which is inseparably linked to the Atma and its vehicle (the sixth principle)." Mahatmas are beings of power and compassion who act only in the interest of humanity as a whole. H.P.B. in the same article says that they have "identified themselves with that Universal Soul which runs through humanity." She further states in another article ("Can the Mahatmas Be Selfish?") that, "No sooner does he allow the 'personal self' to assert itself than he ceases to be a MAHATMA."

The word "evidence" comes from the root *to see* or to have *vision*. We have outer vision and inner vision. *Real evidence* for the existence of Mahatmas, as has been seen, could not be established through outer vision. Mahatmas (Masters) are said to be beings of great knowledge and also "the embodiment of charity, tolerance, justice and universal force." ("The Theosophical Mahatmas"). This is a high nature indeed! In "Mahatmas and Chelas" the statement is made:

> Higher things can be perceived only by a sense pertaining to those higher things. And whoever therefore wants to see the real Mahatma, must use his intellectual sight. He must so elevate his *Manas* that its perception will be clear and all mists created by *Maya* must be dispelled.

"Real evidence" for Masters of Wisdom, then, would seem to lie only within the intellectual sight of each individual. This sort of evidence is subjective and cannot be assembled objectively. For example, the Theosophic view of evolution points directly to the possibility of, and then to the actual necessity of, the existence of perfected men. And such men would be those who have overcome the "illusion of matter" and have "identified themselves with that Universal Soul which runs through humanity."

There is also the testimony of the ages. In every land and every age there have been historical or "traditional" accounts of great men, *Teachers*, *Saviors*, and *preservers* of *truth* who are men of "power and and compassion." These accounts may be discounted if one chooses to ignore all that he may perceive within himself. This perception requires an inner growth and culminates in a recognition which is described by Mr. Judge in answer to a question: "There must be within the man something which he already knows, that leaps up and out. . . ." (Judge pamphlet, No. 28.)

Why should the Black or Iron Age, referred to as Kali Yuga, be so much shorter than the other periods called Golden, Silver, and Bronze?

In *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 37), H.P.B. makes a clear statement regarding the nature of "Time," which should be borne in mind when considering such questions: Time

> Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced; but "lies asleep.". . .

If "time" is "produced by the succession of our states of consciousness," the various ages—Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Iron—represent differing states of our being similar to the changes we experience in moving from infancy through childhood to adolescence, and then finally into maturity. In maturity we meet our full responsibility, with the force of karmic causes coming due as circumstances permit. The Iron Age or Kali Yuga may be thought of as that period of maturity for the race as a whole. We may infer from the *Secret Doctrine* reference that the frequency of the events is related causally to the velocity of "time" our consciousness is experiencing. "Time," therefore, would appear relative, being dependent upon our state of consciousness for its existence.

In Theosophy, "illusion" represents the field for our experience. This field is, however, real enough for those of us living within its boundaries. Each individual is both the creator and the occupant of the "space and time" he finds himself experiencing through the unfolding of cyclic and karmic law. Nothing occurs without a cause, and this is true of the common experience of "time." "Time" can be said to be the "form" of a cycle. This form provides the appropriate vehicle for experience. The same might be said of the bodily forms which are drawn into existence as effects of causes sufficient to provide vehicles for the experience of the Soul within a particular cycle of "time."

In *Isis Unveiled* (I, 34), H.P.B. makes a general statement about the cyclic sequences within the ages:

> The division of the history of mankind into Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron Ages, is not a fiction. We see the same thing in the literature of peoples. An age of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness is invariably followed by an age of criticism and consciousness. The one affords material for the analyzing and critical intellect of the other.

This would indicate that there is a gradual accumulation of karmic forces during the first three ages, held in abeyance until appropriate circumstances provide the needed channels through which they may flow. These circumstances, and thus the needed channels, emerge in the time of race maturity. Mr. Judge describes unseen influences as well as alterations in the astral realms in his article "The Kali Yuga—the Present Age":

> All the inner as well as the outer fibre of the man is the result of long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thought and physical tendencies in a way

> you cannot comprehend. All those tendencies affect him. . . . he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago. Further yet are the peculiar alterations brought about in the astral world. It, being at once a photographic plate, so to say, and also a reflector, has become the keeper of the mistakes of ages past which it continually reflects upon us from a plane to which most of us are strangers. In that sense, therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly under the suggestions thus cast upon us. (Pamphlet No. 9.)

Astral World

Referring to the present age in a letter to a student (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 14), Mr. Judge speaks further of these influences:

> Kali is always painted black. Yet Kali Yuga, by its very nature and terrible, swift momentum, permits one to do more with his energies in a shorter time than in any other Yuga. But heavens, what combat! Demons from all the spheres; waving clouds of smoky Karma; dreadful shapes; stupefying exhalations from every side.

In the article "The Kali-Yuga—The Present Age," more is said of opportunities and possible benefits due to the swiftness of action:

> There is one thing peculiar to the present *Kali-Yuga* that may be used by the student. All causes now bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other or better age. A sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations under *Kali-Yuga*'s reign than he could in a much greater number in any other age. Thus by bearing all the manifold troubles of this Age and steadily triumphing, the object of his efforts will be more quickly realized, for while the obstacles seem great, the powers to be invoked can be reached more quickly.

The age, therefore, is not entirely black. A glance at the history of the Western world will tell us that "dark" ages are followed by periods of comparative enlightenment.

on the lookout

Anxious Fanaticism

In *Harper's* for last March, John P. Sisk, discussing the oddities of fanatics such as those who declare the earth to be flat, reveals a curious aspect of the psychology of Kali Yuga. In these days, he says, "fanaticism is less a reaction against orthodoxy than it is nature's way of filling the vacuum of anomie and unbelief." H. P. Blavatsky wrote of "The Fall of Ideals" in her time, noting the pessimism to which it led, and Mr. Sisk, commenting on the present mood, remarks that "not even a Tertullian could believe in a harmonious coming together of the races of man." He suggests:

> In the face of a fragmented, alienated, and confused human condition, we depend upon our fanaticisms for spiritual and even physical survival.
>
> Most people, having neither the time nor the psychic energy to commit themselves to passionate fanaticisms, fill the vacuum of their lives with less exacting obsessions. Thus we chant mantras, grow beards, or change sex; we hook ourselves up to E-meters, bedeck ourselves with pentagons, pentacles, golden crosses, and Lady Luck medallions, hoping for success in work, love, or bingo; we take up jogging, psychotherapy, or born-again Christianity. We look for our true selves in the hope of discovering whatever weak source of conviction might reside there.

A Curious Contrast

Actually, for Mr. Sisk, the members of the Flat Earth Society seem to have more health in them than the anxious faddists. Like the early Christians, he says, they quietly hold together in hostile surroundings:

> They do not insist that stamps be issued in honor of their current president. They do not picket their Copernican neighbors, and they even allow a decent latitude of opinion among themselves. They don't insist that all members in good standing revere Mr. Johnson [the president of the society] the way est people revere Werner Erhard, or make annual pilgrimages across the ice fields to take a reverent peek over the ultimate edge into the abysmal chasm below.

Tomorrow's Psychology

Normal "sanity" is becoming increasingly difficult to define, these days. It will probably remain so until the modern world develops genuine psychological knowledge and self-understanding. In one of her *Lucifer* articles, H.P.B. briefly stated the principles of such a psychology:

> The mind is dual in its potentiality: it is physical and metaphysical. The higher part of the mind is connected with the spiritual soul or Buddhi, the lower with the animal soul, the Kama principle. There are persons who never think with the higher faculties of their mind at all; those who do so are the minority and are thus, in a way, *beyond*, if not above, the average of human kind. These will think even upon ordinary matters on that *higher* plane. The idiosyncrasy of the person determines in which "principle" of the mind the thinking is done, as also the faculties of a preceding life, and sometimes the heredity of the physical. This is why it is so very difficult for a materialist—the metaphysical portion of whose brain is almost atrophied—to raise himself, or for one who is naturally spiritually minded, to descend to the level of the matter-of-fact vulgar thought. Optimism and pessimism depend on it also in a large measure. ("Dialogues Between the Two Editors.")

Mendeleef's Inspiration

Students of *The Secret Doctrine* familiar with H.P.B.'s treatment of Mendeleef's septenary arrangement of the elements (I, 586fn.) will be interested to learn what sort of scientist "discovered" the Periodic Law. A sketch of his attitude and interests is given by Lewis Feuer in the Winter 1978 *Inquiry*, in an article titled "Teleological Principles in Science," in which the writer presents evidence to show that even materialistic scientists have had the idea of an underlying purpose in natural phenomena, although perhaps unknown to themselves. Dmitri Mendeleef was no materialist. According to Feuer, he took his inspiration from the poet, Fyodor Tyutchev, who had written:

> Know how to live within.
> Your soul contains a world
> Of mysterious, magical thoughts;
> The outer tumult stifles.
> Hear their song and be silent.

A Pantheistic Mystic

Mendeleef had been urged by his mother, with her dying words: "Patiently search divine and scientific truth." Prof. Feuer writes:

> Mendeleev said he conceived his Periodic System [proposed in 1869] when, undertaking to write a textbook of chemistry, he was faced with the necessity of systematizing a huge body of diverse facts and information. But evidently something of a pantheistic, mystical longing to see a Chain of Being ramify through the chemical facts was the teleological *a priori* of his systematizing task. The pantheistic mystic communicated silently with the textbook writer. For Mendeleev himself was indeed explicitly aware that the personality of the scientist, his emotional longings and values, shaped the character of scientific theorizing. . . . The work of science as it approached the divine plan brought to Mendeleev's eyes "pure enjoyment," "that pure enjoyment experienced on approaching to the ideal, in that eagerness to draw aside the veil from hidden truth."

Feuer quotes from the famous chemist:

> "To conceive, understand, and grasp the whole symmetry of the scientific edifice . . . is equivalent to tasting that enjoyment only conveyed by the highest forms of beauty and truth. Without the material, the plan alone is but a castle in the air—a mere possibility; whilst the material without a plan is but useless matter."

The Occult Teaching

Prof. Feuer comments: "The teleological principle affirmed that the physical universe must be such as to realize the highest form of beauty and truth," and he concludes his article by saying: "Teleological cravings, these conjoint demands of our intellect, feeling, and will, may somehow take us directly to the core of reality." This is a mood which surfaces ever more frequently in the present-day work of leading scientists and thinkers.

H.P.B.'s reference to the Periodic Law takes this form:

> From the stars twinkling high in heaven, to the sparks flying asunder from the rude fire built by the savage in his forest; from the hierarchies and the essential constitution of the Dhyan Chohans—organized for diviner apprehensions and a loftier range of perception than the greatest Western psychologist ever dreamed of, down to Nature's *classification* of species among the humblest insects; finally from worlds to atoms, everything in the universe, from great to small, proceeds in its spiritual and physical evolution, cyclically and septennially, showing its seventh and fourth number (the latter the turning point) behaving in the same way as shown in that periodic law of atoms. (*S.D.* I, 586fn.)

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Lindbergh's Philosophy

In his book about the meaning of things, *Autobiography of*

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Values (Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich, 1978), Charles Lindbergh tells how he changed from a mechanist admirer of science at age twenty-three to what can only be described as an intuitive philosopher. "In New Guinea at age forty-two, I realized that the senses often had contact with a wisdom deeper than the mind's."

> Lying in that mountain pool, I let elements within me fragment or unify without restraint. There, I was unbound by law and custom. I felt no need for any article made by man. Physically, I had what I was born with, and there was nothing more I desired. No luxury could have added to the peace, the beauty, the contentment I experienced. There, in that pool, was the essential "I," escaped from the outer framework of my life as the Buddhist's soul must escape the body between its incarnations. *Does the soul look back upon its body as I looked back upon my fighting plane, as an outer shell, as a convenient tool for material accomplishments?*
>
> On the one hand, man is an individual; on the other, he manifests a life stream that comprises the past of the human race and extends to its future. . . . Theoretically, the individual can manipulate his life stream to revolutionize his race or temperament. He can shape successive incarnations as a sculptor shapes his clay. But practically, the excesses he might achieve are checked by his inability in one incarnation to control his actions in the next. . . .

Miraculous Potentialities

Similar reflections appear in the concluding pages of this volume:

> You consider life's relationship to cosmic being, and wonder why the apparition of individuality exists. When you re-enter that individuality you bring a new awareness with you. In man, in all of us, an awareness has developed that re-encompasses the universe from which life came, and awareness of beauty and love, and a knowledge of sensation, intuition, and the reaches beyond knowledge. . . . As the miracle of awareness has evolved in our existence, intuition tells us it will continue to evolve, that the miracle of human life contains potentialities still more miraculous, that the miraculous is unconfined. In some future incarnation from our life stream, we may even understand the reason for our existence in forms of earthly life.
>
> The growing knowledge of science does not refute man's intuition of the mystical. Whether outwardly or inwardly, whether in space or in time, the farther we penetrate the unknown, the vaster and more marvelous it becomes.

During earlier years of this century, Charles Lindbergh was a hero for countless young Americans. Quite evidently, their admiration was not undeserved.

Therapists and Reincarnation

The March *Newsletter* of the Association of Humanistic Psychology reprints from another source a discussion by Arthur Hastings of the spreading interest in reincarnation among psychotherapists and parapsychologists. After noting the work of Dr. Ian Stevenson in the field of reincarnation research, this writer says:

> The trend of current interest is more popular than scholarly. One facet of this interest is curiosity and perhaps ego-gratification. To learn that you were once a princess in Egypt or a blacksmith in France, a Sherpa or a Sufi teacher may give you a thrill, add spice to your self-concept, or confirm that your life has a particular meaning.
>
> The other major thread of interest in past lives is emerging from some psychotherapists who have reported that traumas or neurotic problems of some of their patients have been resolved when the patient remembered a traumatic incident apparently from a past life.

Misleading Claims

After noting that this idea is compatible with the Freudian claim that recalling an earlier incident consciously can be a means of overcoming its effects, Dr. Hastings points out that therapists may not be able to tell the difference between an actual memory of a past life and fantasies which come from some other source. He warns against trying to use therapeutically "a claim to historical reality that cannot be established and which has the emotional charge now surrounding a 'past life'." This seems a worthwhile comment, especially when it is realized that reincarnation for this writer means, as he says, "continuation of the individual personality." Much confusion is spread by this belief, since the "personality" does not reincarnate, save in the case of children who die at an early age. The personality is not reborn, but at death is divided into higher and lower elements, the lower being left to disintegrate in Kama Loka, while the higher qualities are assimilated to the character of the ego in the devachanic condition. Conceivably, "memories" of a personal sort are in most cases a tapping of the resources of the astral light, with its vast reservoir of images, or a pick-up of clots of skandhas on that plane. Two articles in Vol. 26 of this Magazine should prove helpful in considering such possibilities. One is " 'Reincarnation' of Shanti Devi"; the other, "The Rebirth of Katsugoro." Taken together, these articles contrast an unlikely claim of rebirth with one that is authentic.

man's power to redeem wrongs

An "Empty Jar"

A reviewer in the same issue of the *AHP Newsletter* gives brief attention to a new book, *Enlightenment of the Whole Body,* by an author who calls himself Bubba Free John. The critic says: Bk.

> I find his claim to be the "First Western Avatar"—or rather, the significance he attaches to the claim—difficult to accept. His views on spirituality appear to be peculiarly narrow-minded when we reflect upon, among other things, the commitments made by Western missionary doctors serving in third world countries, some of whom work 18-20 hours a day for years. I can't help but wonder—who performs a greater spiritual service to human kind?

According to this review, "Bubba claims to be completely enlightened and a living manifestation of the godhead." Moreover, "He equates himself with such personages as Christ and Buddha." The skepticism of the critic seems wholly justified. The claims attributed to this individual recall some remarks by H.P.B. at the end of her article, "Modern Apostles and Pseudo-Messiahs":

> Of one thing, rationally-minded people, apart from Theosophists, may be sure. And that is, service for humanity is its all-sufficient reward; and that empty jars are the most resonant of sound. To know a very little of the philosophy of life, of man's power to redeem wrongs and to teach others, to perceive how to thread the tangled maze of existence on this globe, and to accomplish aught of lasting and *spiritual* benefit, is to annihilate all desire or thought of posing as a heaven-sent saviour of the people. . . . The best practical reformers of the outside abuses we have known, such as slavery, deprivation of the rights of woman, legal tyrannies, oppressions of the poor, have never dreamed of posing as Messiahs.

The Making of Religion

The mind of the times grows in various ways. The present spirit emerging in scientific thinking is one illustration. Another may be taken from one of the letters of D. H. Lawrence written early in this century. Here a novelist who was to become famous in later years addressed a Congregational minister who was a close friend of his mother:

> Now I do not believe in conversion, such conversion. I believe that a man is converted when he first hears the low, vast murmur of life, of human life, troubling his hitherto unconscious self. I believe a man is born first unto himself—for the happy developing of himself, while the world is a nursery, and the pretty things are to be snatched for, and pleasant things

tasted; some people seem to exist thus right to the end. But most are born again on entering manhood; then they are born to humanity, to a consciousness of all the laughing, and the never-ceasing murmur of pain and sorrow that comes from the terrible multitudes of brothers. Then, it appears to me, a man gradually formulates his religion, be it what it may. A man has no religion who has not slowly and painfully gathered one together, adding to it, shaping it; and one's religion is never complete and final, it seems, but must always be undergoing modification. So I contend that true Socialism is religion; that honesty, fervent politics are religion; that whatever a man will labour for earnestly and in some measure unselfishly is religion.

Too Great a Burden

I have now only to state my position with regard to Christianity. At the present moment I do not, cannot believe in the divinity of Jesus. There are only the old doubts in the way, the old questions. . . . I cannot be a materialist—but Oh, how is it possible that a God who speaks to all hearts can let Belgravia go laughing to a vicious luxury, and Whitechapel cursing to a filthy debauchery—such suffering, such dreadful suffering—and shall the short years of Christ's mission atone for it all? . . . (*Harper's*, March, 1979.)

Lawrence was a child of Kali Yuga, one who no doubt saw through a glass darkly, yet anyone of this intensity of thought and feeling will surely find his way.

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